

REMARKS

I. Introduction

Claims 1, 3 and 5-9 are pending in the above application.

Claims 1, 3 and 5-9 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a).

II. Amendments

Claims 2, 4 and 10-15 have been cancelled without prejudice or disclaimer.

Claims 1, 3, 5, 6, and 7 have been amended to more concisely claim that which applicant regards as the invention therein.

Support for the amendments to claim 1 may be found at least in Figure 3A and the corresponding description thereof in the specification.

No new matter has been added.

III. Prior Art Rejections

Claims 1, 3 and 5-9 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Okawa et al. (JP Pub. 61-294961) (hereafter "Okawa") in view of Tachell et al. (U.S. Pat. 6,160,877) (hereafter "Tachell").

Obviousness can only be established by combining or modifying the teachings of the prior art to produce the *claimed invention* where there is some teaching, suggestion, or motivation to do so found either in the references themselves or in the knowledge generally available to one of ordinary skill in the art. *Ecolochem Inc. v. Southern California Edison Co.*, 227 F.3d 1361, 56 U.S.P.Q.2d (BNA) 1065 (Fed. Cir. 2000); *In re Dembiczak*, 175 F.3d 994, 999, 50 U.S.P.Q.2D (BNA) 1614, 1617 (Fed. Cir. 1999); *In*

re Fine, 837 F.2d 1071, 5 U.S.P.Q.2d 1596 (Fed. Cir. 1988); *In re Jones*, 958 F.2d 347, 21 U.S.P.Q.2d 1941 (Fed. Cir. 1992). See also MPEP 2143.01.

Neither Okawa nor Tachell, taken alone or in combination, disclose or suggest the combination of elements of amended claim 1 as a whole, including using a plurality of mailboxes and a controller which refers to a response message control table for judging whether a response message corresponding to the caller information detected by the caller information detector is assigned or not, and when it is judged that a response message corresponding to the caller information detected by the caller information detector is not assigned, reproduces a response message not assigned to the caller information, as required by amended claim 1. Okawa merely discloses a conventional voice storage system without a caller information detector. Tachell discloses a system for providing a greeting corresponding to a calling number of a calling party. Tachell also does not disclose the above features of amended claim 1.

As neither Okawa nor Kotsuki, taken alone or in combination, disclose or suggest at least the above features of amended claim 1, neither Okawa nor Kotsuki, taken alone or in combination produce the claimed invention of amended claim 1. Accordingly, neither Okawa nor Kotsuki, taken alone or in combination, render amended claim 1, nor claims 3 and 5-9 which depend on amended claim 1 as obvious.

IV. Conclusion

Having fully and completely responded to the Office Action, Applicants submit that all of the claims are now in condition for allowance, an indication of which is respectfully solicited. If there are any outstanding issues that might be resolved by an

interview or an Examiner's amendment, the Examiner is requested to call Applicants' attorney at the telephone number shown below.

To the extent necessary, a petition for an extension of time under 37 C.F.R. 1.136 is hereby made. Please charge any shortage in fees due in connection with the filing of this paper, including extension of time fees, to Deposit Account 500417 and please credit any excess fees to such deposit account.

Respectfully submitted,
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